

Remarks in Aberdeen, South Dakota October 31, 2002

The President. Thank you all. Thanks a lot for coming. Thanks for having me here. The next time you get me to come back, let's go pheasant hunting. I can't go today. [Laughter] I've got to work. I'm traveling our country to remind people that the American spirit is alive and well today.

That spirit is the spirit of a determined nation willing to defend our freedoms, no matter what the cost. That American spirit says loud and clear that we're willing to serve something greater than ourselves. We're willing to serve people in need, a community we love. And part of the American spirit is for our citizens to exercise their duty, and their duty is to cast a vote on November the 5th. You have a duty. You have a duty in this country. If you believe in freedom, if you believe in the values that make this country the finest nation on the face of the Earth, you have a duty to go to the polls. That's part of what it means to live in a free society.

I want to thank you all who have voted. I want to thank you who are fixing to vote. And I've got some suggestions for you when you get inside the voting booth. [Laughter] For the sake of South Dakota, for the sake of our country, John Thune should be the next United States Senator.

Audience members. Thune! Thune! Thune!

The President. For the sake of South Dakota and for the sake of the country, Bill Janklow needs to be the next United States Congressman. And for the sake of South Dakota, particularly the sake for excellence in education, Mike Rounds needs to be the next Governor.

I urge all the citizens of this State and around the country, Republican, Democrat, or independent alike, to go to the polls. But I believe when those discerning Democrats and those wise independents take a look at the candidates that I'm here to sup-

port, they're going to vote for them. It's in the best interests of their families. It's in the best interests of this State that these three men be elected to their offices.

Not only have these three good men decided to put their hat in the ring, all of them married above themselves. [Laughter] Kimberley Thune is a great wife of John Thune. She is a wonderful lady. She'll bring a lot of class—she has brought a lot of class to Washington. We're proud to call her friend. John is proud to call her wife, and her kids are proud to call her mother.

I'm proud to be up here with Mary Dean Janklow, who's been a great first lady for the State of South Dakota. And Jean Rounds will be a great first lady for the State of South Dakota.

I know something about First Ladies. One of them got stuck with me. [Laughter] Laura sends her love; she sends her very best. She's coming to the State to campaign, which means you drew the short straw. [Laughter] Laura and I share the values of the people of South Dakota. After all, as John mentioned, we were raised in west Texas. It's good. [Laughter] Then you know what I'm talking about. Actually, when I married Laura, she was a public school librarian. She didn't like politics. She didn't care for politicians. [Laughter] Thank goodness she said yes when I was there on bended knee. America now knows why I asked her to marry me. She's smart. She's capable. She's calm. She is a great First Lady for this country.

I want to thank Dr. Hilpert for opening up this beautiful facility for this rally. I want to thank the university staff for putting up with the President's entourage. I want to thank you for your hospitality. I want to thank the mayor of Aberdeen, Tom Hooper, for coming out to say hello today. I appreciate—Tom Hopper. I appreciate

very much his hospitality. I want to thank all my citizens for coming.

I want to thank the grassroots activists who are here. I want to thank you for your activity in the democratic process. I want to thank you for turning out the vote. I want to thank you for what you have done in the past. I want to thank you for what you are going to do during the next couple of days, which is to man the phones, which is to go to your coffee shops and remind the people there that when you find good, honorable, decent, honest people, they ought to vote for them. When you go to your community centers, urge your neighbors to turn out to vote. Make sure that you do your duty not only to vote but, if you believe in the character and the vision of these candidates, turn out your neighbors to the polls come next Tuesday. Work hard. And you know what's going to happen on election day: These three good people are going to get elected.

And there is a reason why. Mike Rounds has got a vision for education for this State that says no child will be left behind, a vision which says every child can be educated. There's a reason why to vote for him, besides the fact that he's a good and honorable man. It's because he's got a vision that's positive for the future of this State.

There's a reason to support Janklow, besides the fact he and I are good buddies. There's a reason to support him, besides the fact it will be a vote that I can count on to make sure that we go the right direction in this country, and that is, he's got a solid record of accomplishment in the State of South Dakota.

And there's a reason why John Thune ought to be in the Senate. He's an independent fellow who works on behalf of the citizens of South Dakota with all his heart. He can work with both Democrats and Republicans. He doesn't get caught up in all the nasty rhetoric that tends to divide our Nation's Capital, that rhetoric which sends bad signals to many of our citizenry. He's

a fellow who works hard on behalf of the schoolchildren of South Dakota. After all, with his help we were able to send \$185 million in educational funding this year. John Thune was working hard to make sure that the schools of South Dakota were treated well.

He's a man who is committed to our military, not just at election time, by the way. After all, his dad, Harold, was a World War II fighter pilot who taught John that peace comes through strength, that the stronger this Nation of ours is, the more peaceful the world will become. John also, like me, listens to his mother. [Laughter] She told him, she said, "You get up there, you better make sure Social Security is secure." And he has made that commitment.

I look forward to working with John on key issues in the United States Senate, like Medicare. That's a key issue. This Nation has made a promise to our seniors, and we need to do something about the Medicare system. After all, medicine is modern; Medicare isn't. Medicine has changed, but Medicare is stuck in the past. I need a Senator with whom I can work to modernize Medicare, and a modern Medicare system means prescription drugs for our seniors.

I need somebody I can work with in the Senate to make sure that the crisis of our—in our judiciary gets solved. There's too many vacancies in our—on our Federal benches, which means the dockets are crowded. It means Americans aren't getting the justice they deserve. The Senate has done a lousy job with my nominees. I need a Senator with whom I can work to make sure that we stop playing petty partisan politics with the judicial nominations I've sent up, to make sure people's records aren't distorted, and to make sure we have a bench that is full of judges who aren't there to write the law but are there to strictly interpret the United States Constitution. And make no mistake about it: That Senator is John Thune.

Audience members. Thune! Thune! Thune!

The President. I appreciate the fact that John understands the importance of agriculture in our economy and in our way of life. He tried to convince me of that one time. I said, "You don't have to convince me. I'm from the second largest agricultural State in the country." He said, "Yeah, but you're not from South Dakota." I said, "No, good point." [Laughter] He understands farmers and ranchers. We both know the values that are found on our farms and our ranches, those family values that are dear to the heart of America.

He knows, if you're good at something, we ought to promote it. We're good at raising crops, and we ought to be selling them all around the world, for the sake of South Dakota farmers and South Dakota ranchers.

He's a commonsense fellow. He understands good, practical policies can make a large difference. We need to change our forest policies. We need to change our forest policies for the sake of the people who live in this State. We need to change our forest policies so we can preserve our national treasure. It doesn't make any sense to have a forest policy that will not allow for thinning and clearing, a forest policy that is so backward that we allow kindling to build up in these forests, and then with an act of nature or with a sleight of hand by mankind, our national treasures burn to the ground. John Thune has got a commonsense vision for good forest policy. I look forward to working with him in the United States Senate to preserve these national heritages.

I look forward to working with John to deal with some of the high hurdles we have to cross as a nation. One of the high hurdles is our economy. Anytime people are looking for work and they can't find work means we've got a problem in America. We've got some good news today. The third quarter growth was positive, and that's good. We're kind of moving our way toward a time when people can find work. But

there's more to do. There's more to do, and Congress has a role to play. They need to get an antiterrorism insurance bill to my desk that will put hardhats back to work, that rewards hardhats and not America's trial lawyers.

But one of the best things we can do is to make sure these tax relief plans that we—package we passed is permanent. The Senate rules say that they last for only 10 years. That creates uncertainty. How can a small-business owner plan for the future if the Tax Code is going to shift around on him or her? You can't. If you want to create jobs, there must be steadiness in our Tax Code. There has to be a permanency to the rules.

And we passed a tax relief plan that over the next 10 years will yield \$3.2 billion in tax relief to the South Dakota citizens. That means you have more money in your pocket. And when you have more money in your pocket, it means you're likely to demand a good or a service. And when you demand a good or a service, in the marketplace it means somebody is likely to produce that good or a service, which means somebody is more likely to find work. For the sake of jobs, for the sake of job creation, we need to make the tax relief permanent.

Be wary of those folks who say we need to revisit the tax relief plan. That's Washington, DC, code for, "I'm fixing to raise your taxes." When the economy is bumping along, we don't need to be raising taxes; we need to be reducing taxes. And we've got to also remember you need to have somebody in Washington that understands whose money we're talking about. That money is not the Government's money. We're talking about your money.

So I look forward to working with Senator Thune and Congressman Janklow on the issues that relate to the—our citizenry, issues like economic growth and good health systems and education. The biggest issue we'll be working on together is to protect the American people. That's the

biggest issue. The biggest challenge we have in America is to protect our citizens from killers. They're nothing but a bunch of coldblooded killers. These people have hijacked a great religion, and they kill innocent life. See, they don't like America; they don't value life like we do. We say in our country, "Everybody matters. Everybody is precious in the sight of an Almighty. Everybody counts." That's not the ways these folks we're chasing down think. You just got to know that.

But the Nation is—we've been warned. We understand the stakes. We understand our life is changed. And so there's a lot of good folks doing everything they can to do our number one job, which is to protect you, a lot of good folks at the Federal level and the State level and the local level doing everything we can to disrupt and deny, to run down every hint, every lead. Anytime we've got any kind of inkling that somebody is thinking about doing something to an American and something to our homeland, you've just got to know we're moving on it, to protect the United States Constitution, and at the same time, we're protecting you.

But we can do a better job. And that's why I went to the United States Congress and asked them to join me in the creation of a Department of Homeland Security, so we can get all of the agencies involved with protecting you to have as their number one focus your protection and, if need be, be able to change cultures within these agencies.

The House of Representatives passed a good bill. I want to thank John Thune for his vote. This bill is stuck in the Senate. It's stuck in the Senate because some Senators are trying to extract a price from the President, and the price is, is that I will give up the capacity to suspend certain bargaining rules in the name of national security, the ability that every President since John F. Kennedy has had.

Let me put it to you this way: The work rules—I wouldn't have the capacity to sus-

pend some work rules for the Department of Homeland Security if I accepted their version, but I would for the Department of Agriculture. Here we are at war; I have more flexibility in dealing with the work rules in the Department of Agriculture than I would in the Department charged with your protection. It doesn't make any sense. I need to be able to put the right people at the right place at the right time to protect the American people. John Thune will support me in advancing a homeland security bill that makes sense.

But the best way to protect you is to find these killers, one at a time, and bring them to justice. And that's exactly what we're going to do. It doesn't matter how long it takes. It just doesn't matter how long it takes to defend our country and defend our freedoms. There's not a calendar on my desk that says, on such-and-such a date you'll be hauling them home, on such-and-such a date we quit. That's not an America I know, and that's not the America you're a part of. You see, when it comes to defending that which we hold dear, our freedoms, it doesn't matter what the cost; it doesn't matter how long it takes.

See, history has called us—it's called this generation into action. And we are not going to let future generations of Americans down. We have an obligation to future generations to do whatever it takes to defend that which we hold dear, and we hold our freedoms dear.

I signed the biggest increase in defense spending since Ronald Reagan was the President. I want to thank the Members of Congress and the Senate for getting that bill to me. The reason I asked for such a big increase is, there's two principles involved. One, anytime we put our troops into harm's way, anytime we put our youngsters into a zone in which there's danger, we owe it to them and we owe it to their loved ones to make sure they've got the best pay, the best training, and the best possible equipment.

And secondly, we're sending a clear signal to friend and foe alike that this is a determined nation. I'm determined to make sure that that doctrine that says, "Either you're with us or with the enemy," is still clear in everybody's mind around the world. It still stands, by the way. If you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist; that doctrine still stands, too. And that defense bill shows we mean what we say.

For those of you who have got loved ones in the military, you need to pass on this message: The Commander in Chief has got all the confidence in the world, all the confidence that our military can achieve any objective. I'm proud of them, and I appreciate their sacrifices for our great Nation.

And we're making progress. We're making progress. Sometimes you'll see it on your TV screens, and sometimes you won't. See, it's a different kind of war. In the old days, we'd destroy tanks and ships and airplanes and say, "Look, we're destroying the enemy's hardware, and we're making progress." This bunch we're fighting is people who hide in caves and send their youngsters to their suicidal deaths. It's a different kind of war. But we're still making progress, one at a time. We're hauling them in. We've got a coalition of people on the hunt.

A couple of thousand of them have been hauled in, and they're no longer a problem. Like number met a different fate, and I can assure you they're not a problem. One of them popped his head up the other day, the guy who was going to be the 20th hijacker. He's not a problem to the United States either. We're slowly but surely rounding these killers up to make America a safe place.

We've got to be clear-eyed. We've got to understand the risk that our country faces. We've got to be realistic, particularly in Washington, DC, when it comes to setting priorities to defending our homeland. It's important that we not see the world

the way we hope it is but we see the world the way it really is. The world changed on September the 11th, 2001. It used to be, when a lot of us were growing up, that oceans could protect us. Oh, if there was a conflict overseas, we could pick or choose if we wanted to be involved, but the threat wasn't really real to America. It might be real to some Americans who were overseas, but it wasn't real to our homeland. It was not a threat, but that all changed. And it's important for those of us who are responsible for your safety to be clear-eyed about the threats, to see threats as they are, not as we hope they are.

There is a threat in Iraq. And the threat exists because a leader there not only has denied and deceived the world about whether or not he's got weapons of mass destruction, but this is a guy who's used weapons of mass destruction. He not only has them; he's used them. And he's not only used them in his neighborhood; he's used them against his own people. This is a man who cannot stand what we stand for. He hates the fact, like Al Qaida does, that we love freedom. See, they can't stand that. This is a guy who has had connections with these shadowy terrorist networks. As I said in Cincinnati, Ohio, a while back, he's the kind of fellow who would love nothing more than to hurt America and not leave any fingerprints by using a surrogate army on his behalf. He's a problem. He's a true threat to America and our friends and allies.

I went to the United Nations a while ago because I want the United Nations to be effective. It's a different kind of war we face; we face different kind of threats. It makes sense for there to be an international body that has got the backbone and the capacity to help keep the peace. And so here is my message, a message, by the way, resoundingly supported by members of both political parties in the Senate and the House: The message to the world is that we want the U.N. to succeed.

We want those resolutions you pass to be listened to. You have told Saddam Hussein he must disarm. Do your job.

And Saddam Hussein, you have said you'll disarm; you need to do your job. But if the U.N. won't act, and if Saddam Hussein won't disarm, for the sake of peace, for the sake of a free future for our children, we will lead a coalition of nations and disarm Saddam Hussein.

There's no doubt, there is no doubt that we have got a chance in this Nation to bring some great good to our country and to the world, out of the evil done to us. You know, I kind of wonder what was going through the enemy's mind when they attacked us. They probably thought we were so selfish and that our true religion was materialism, so self-centered that after 9/11/2001, oh, we might file a lawsuit or two. I guess they've been watching too much TV. [*Laughter*] They don't understand the country.

This country is tough, and it's strong, and it's determined. And by being tough and strong and determined, we can bring peace to the world. You got to know, amidst all the talk—please tell your kids that amongst all the talk that you're hearing, the vision is peace. And I believe it's going to happen. I believe it's not only peace for Americans, but because we value every life—everybody is important; each person matters—there can be peace in parts of the world that have given up on peace. I believe it's possible to have peace in the Middle East. I believe it's possible to have peace in South Asia. The enemy has given us a chance, after our grief, not only to be alert here at home but to work hard to keep the peace elsewhere. And we will.

And here at home, we can be a better America, too. And that's important for you all to realize, that out of the evil done to America can come some incredible good. There are pockets of despair and hopelessness in America. There are people who hurt. There are people who wonder wheth-

er or not the American experience is meant for them, people whose lives are hopeless, people whose lives are addicted, people whose lives have no love. And while Government can help and pass laws, what Government cannot do is put hope in people's hearts or a sense of purpose in people's lives. That's done when a fellow citizen takes it upon herself or himself to put their arm around a neighbor in need, a child, and say, "I love you. What can I do to help you?"

And that's happening in this country, and that's happening in neighborhood after neighborhood after neighborhood. No, the American spirit is alive and well. Part of that spirit is serving something greater than yourself in life.

Today when I came to the airport, I met Clay Crawford, father of four. He took it upon himself for the past couple of years to mentor at-risk youths. I'm confident that amongst you there are hundreds of people who are doing the very same thing, being a part of that movement to make sure that the American experience is alive and well in every corner of our country. It doesn't matter whether you're going to see a shut-in or running a Boy Scout troop or a Girl Scout troop. It doesn't matter whether you're a youngster wanting to be involved with the USA Freedom Corps. My call to you is, in order to fight evil, is to do some good. You see, it's the gathering momentum of millions of acts of kindness and decency which define the true character of the greatest country on the face of the Earth.

Thank you for representing the American spirit. Thank you for coming. May God bless you all, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 a.m. in the Barnett Center at Northern State University. In his remarks, he referred to John M. Hilpert, president, Northern State University; Harold and Pat Thune, parents of Representative John R. Thune; Ramzi bin al-

Shibh, an Al Qaida operative suspected of helping to plan the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, who was captured in Karachi,

Pakistan; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks in South Bend, Indiana October 31, 2002

The President. Thank you all. Thanks for coming. I'm glad I came. I'm glad I came back. The last time I was here, the Fighting Irish were 1-0. This time, they're 8-0. Seems like you ought to keep inviting me back. [*Laughter*] I know this for sure: The next time I come back, with your help, Chris Chocola is going to be the next United States Congressman.

I'm traveling this country, and I can tell you, the American spirit is alive and well, the spirit of people understanding that to be an American means you've got to serve something greater than yourself. The spirit of America says that we're willing to sacrifice for our freedoms. And the spirit of America says that you take nothing in democracy for granted. You see, if you're eligible to vote, you have an obligation to vote. That's what the spirit of America calls for.

You have an obligation to our country; you have an obligation to democracy itself. So I'm here to—in South Bend to urge Republicans and Democrats and independents, people who don't care about political parties, to do your duty and to go to the polls, to assume your responsibility as an American and go to the polls. And by the way, I've got a suggestion when you get in there: Chris Chocola is the right man for the job.

I want to thank Congressman Steve Buyer for being here—thanks for coming, Steve—I want to thank Mark Souder for coming—two of the fine Congressmen in the United States Congress for joining us. I want to thank those who are running statewide, the candidates who are up here

with us who are out asking for your vote. I want to thank Todd Rokita, running for secretary of state. I want to thank Connie Nass, running for auditor. And I want to thank Tim Berry, who's running for State treasurer. I want to thank them for their dedication to the great State of Indiana, and I want to thank you for your service to your community.

I want to say something about Sarah—that would be the next Congressman's wife. I appreciate her taking on this task. I know something about what it takes to put a family through a political process. It requires a strong partner, somebody who believes in the country as much as the candidate does. And I'm here to tell you Sarah Chocola is going to be a great Congressman's wife.

And speaking about great wives, Laura sends her love, and she sends her best. She's doing great. A lot of people in the country now understand why I asked her to marry me. A lot of them are still wondering why she said yes. [*Laughter*] But she's learned she can make a huge difference in the lives of our citizens. She cares deeply about the capacity of every child in America to read. She is a fabulous First Lady, and she is—[*applause*].

I want to thank all the good folks here who are active in the political process. You call them grassroots activists. Those are the people who are willing to put up the signs, the people willing to make the phone calls, the people who can really determine the outcome of an election. I want to thank you for what you have done, and I want to thank you for what you're going to do